



# Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

APPROVED

**Date:** December 10, 2018, 1900 hours

**Location:** Winchester Hall  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Hearing Room  
12 E. Church Street, Frederick, MD 21701

**Attendance:**

Battalion 1 (Todd Johnson) .....	Present
Battalion 2 (David Remsburg).....	Absent
Battalion 3 (Susan Nicol) .....	Present
Battalion 4 (Micky Fyock) .....	Present
Battalion 5 (Tim Clarke) .....	Present
Career Rep (Warren "Jay" Schwab).....	Absent
Career Rep (Kevin Schmidt) .....	Present
Citizen Rep (Susan Reeder Jessee).....	Absent
Citizen Rep (Gunnar Pedersen) .....	Present

**Nonvoting Reps:**

Frederick County Executive (Jan H. Gardner) .....	Absent
Jurisdictional Medical Director (Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore).....	Present
Fire & Rescue Services (Chief Tom Owens) .....	Present
Volunteer Fire & Rescue Assoc. (President Eric Smothers) .....	Present
Volunteer Fire & Rescue Assoc. (Chief Kevin Fox).....	Present
Local #3666 (President Stephen Jones).....	Present

**Guests:** None.

**Frederick County Fire Advisory Board Meeting  
December 10, 2018**

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Tim Clarke.

**II. ROLL CALL OF VOTING AND NONVOTING MEMBERS:**

Absent was:

1. Jan Gardner, County Executive
2. Dave Remsburg, Battalion 2
3. Jay Schwab, Career Firefighter Representative
4. Susan Reeder-Jessee, Citizen Representative

**III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:**

None.

**IV. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

Motion to approve October meeting minutes: Moved by Susan Nicol. Seconded by Todd Johnson.

**VOTE:    YES:    6    NO:    0    ABSTAIN:    0    PASSED**

**V. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Chairman Tim Clarke wished the board members a Merry Christmas, as the board would not be meeting again until January. Susie Nicol added "Happy New Year."

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chief Ben Nalborczyk, from the New Market District Volunteer Fire Company, shared his concerns regarding to the proposal for an incentive-based formula for ambulance billing revenue sharing. Chairman Tim Clarke thanked Chief Nalborczyk for his comments and stated that the Board would take his comments under consideration when this was discussed later in the meeting.

**VII. EX OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS:**

**A. Frederick County Executive, Mrs. Jan Gardner:**

As County Executive Jan Gardner was absent, no report was given.

**B. Jurisdictional Medical Director, Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore:**

State Executive Director for MIEMSS

Dr. Fillmore stated that Dr. Theodore R. Delbridge has been chosen as the new State Executive Director for MIEMSS and will begin in February, 2019. Dr. Timothy Chizmar has also been chosen to replace Dr. Richard Alcorta as the State Medical Director.

#### BLS Training

Dr. Fillmore shared that Frederick County's training staff would be going to MFRI to model their BLS Training Program, which has been very successful. President Smothers added that this would be taking place on December 11, 2018.

#### Paramedic Class

The next paramedic class is slated to begin in February with thirteen people, which includes one volunteer. This will be a daytime program, running Monday through Friday.

#### EMS Medications

Dr. Fillmore stated that Chief Cole was able to get an order of morphine, as fentanyl has been hard to procure.

#### CPAP Device

CPAP will be changed to a device that is more adaptable for various deliveries for oxygen levels, which has been identified as a problem.

#### State MIEMSS

Dr. Fillmore noted that Pat Gainer, from MIEMSS, has been working with the State on some issues regarding compensation for several programs, including the Mobile Integrated Health Program, treat-and-release programs, and an alternate destination program, which would help to lower the amount of patients going to the ER and instead deliver them to a place for observation and sobering up.

#### Protocol Adjustments

Some adjustments have been made to the Adult Tachycardia protocol as well as protocols for the DNR MOLST forms, morphine as an optional substitute in the absence of fentanyl, and the protocol for some stroke patients. These adjustments will roll out July 1, 2019.

#### **Question Asked: "Is Nitronox still a thing anywhere in the country in hospitals?"**

Dr. Fillmore stated that Nitronox is a hard drug to regulate and tends to be abused. President Smothers stated that it is actually part of the national EMT curriculum, but the State is currently unwilling to take it on.

### **C. Fire & Rescue Division Director, Chief Tom Owens:**

#### North Frederick Fire Station

Chief Owens stated that an agreement has been reached between the County and the Board of Education for a land swap in lieu of the County purchasing the site from the Board of Education, which is good news from a budget-saving standpoint.

#### Apparatus

The ladder truck for Middletown Fire Station became operational and went into service December 9, 2018.

#### Recruit Classes

Recruit Class #24 began on October 29<sup>th</sup> with 22 recruits remaining with 28 new positions to fill. Recruit Class #25 is slated to start in March with a class of 30. The hiring process for that continues. CPAT is underway as well as individual interviews. Conditional offers will be sent to about 60 candidates, who will then go through the background investigation, psychological evaluation, and medical examination. .



#### Salary and Benefit Analysis

A compensation study will be performed by Emergency Services Consulting, Inc. It will compare our county's salaries and benefits with that of five other jurisdictions that Frederick County competes with most directly.

#### Fort Detrick Fire Chief

Chief Owens stated that the new Fire Chief for Fort Detrick, Sean Edwards, has reported for duty. He comes to Fort Detrick from a base in Detroit. It was also relayed that the Deputy Chief had been hired as well.

**Question Asked: "I know there's been maybe a private partnership, maybe, with Juniors for a site, or is that . . ."**

Todd Johnson stated that they had not been successful with the land search. Chief Owens stated he would be meeting with their board Wednesday night to talk about the partnership to jointly develop, occupy, and operate the facility.

**Question Asked: "But the thought process, from what I'm hearing, is that Juniors would move out there."**

"Yes," replied Chief Owens. Chief Owens stated the goal is to re-center Juniors into their service area. The impact of a relocation will be discussed with the Junior Fire Company's leadership Wednesday night.

**Question Asked: "Where do we stand with the draft of the service delivery plan?"**

Chief Owens replied that it is in the hands of the County Executive. He believes she has been waiting for the new Council to be seated before moving that discussion forward.

#### **D. President, FCVFRA, Eric Smothers:**

##### Budget Committee

President Smothers stated that information has gone out to each one of the stations at the last Association meeting on some potential budgetary increases going forward. The Budget Committee is still working to process that and it has gone out to the Battalions for feedback and input.

##### Accreditation Process

President Smothers stated that most of the accreditation process has been completed with only one station still in non-compliance. The Association was in agreement to forward the draft that was represented at the last FRAB meeting for the withholding of funding for companies not in compliance with the accreditation process.

#### **E. Local #3666, President, Stephen Jones:**

Stephen Jones had no report for the December meeting.

#### **F. Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association Director, Kevin Fox:**

##### Accreditation Process

Chief Fox reported that Chairperson Keller had called him before the FRAB meeting to confirm that Company #30 has completed the accreditation process.

##### Budget Committee

The Budget Committee will meet December 11<sup>th</sup>.

#### Gear-Up Class

Chief Fox stated that Gear-Up class was in progress with 23 new volunteer personnel.

#### LOSAP Committee

The LOSAP Committee will meet again on December 19<sup>th</sup>. Chief Fox stated there is a draft LOSAP ordinance change that is being recommended, which includes some definitions for the LOSAP Trust Committee, and a recommendation to incorporate the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board as an oversight committee for that group. That draft was sent to Eric Smothers for review with the hope of it being brought to the Executive Committee for consideration.

#### Operations Committee

The Operations Committee was held on November 20<sup>th</sup> at the training center. The group unanimously approved the Drone Policy as well as a draft of the FCVFRA Substance Abuse Policy. Also brought up at the meeting Operations was follow-up testing within the Substance Abuse Policy. The Policy stated that follow-up testing was to be paid for by the volunteer member, and that was inconsistent with the County employee policy. It has now been made consistent with the County government employee policy.

Chief Fox stated that the Operations Committee also discussed response improvement, goals, and objectives, with the recommendation that the information be sent back to the Battalions for further direction.

The Deputy Director position was approved by the County Executive in a supplemental budget. The job description has been created and is being reviewed and appropriately classified by the Human Resources division.

Todd Johnson informed the board that ASTM International was developing standards for drone operations that may impact the policy. He suggested that Chief Fox may want to hold off until those standards are formulated, so that the drone policy is consistent with those standards.

#### EMS Committee

President Smothers added that the State is still looking at trying to make improvements for the current EMT curriculum. He emphasized the need for all the departments to have candidates go through the platinum test cycle for further guidance and higher success rates for testing.

### **VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **A. Old Business**

##### PulsePoint CPR Notification App

Chief Owens reported that programming has taken a bit longer due to getting the specific programming configuration needed from the vendor for Frederick County. A public roll-out is scheduled for February 9<sup>th</sup> at "Community CPR Awareness" which will be held at the fairgrounds. The County Executive will do a public announcement and provide instruction on how to obtain the app and what the app is programmed to do.

##### Accreditation Process

Chief Fox stated that they are continuing to work on improvements to the membership database and have added a training module with the Vigilant Hose Company's assistance. This remains a work in progress, but Chief Fox has great aspirations for the system.

##### Volunteer Background Check

Chief Fox had nothing new to report.



#### Revised Amendment to Finance Regulations for Appropriation

Chief Owens updated the Board on the progress for this amendment, stating that it had been through policy review, endorsed at the last Executive Committee meeting, and was now back for final action by the Advisory Board. It will then go through the County Executive's office to the Finance Division and be edited into the County Finance Regulation. This regulation will give us the authority to enforce compliance with rules, regulations, and policies & procedures if enforcement is required.

#### **B. New Business**

##### Amendment to EMS Billing Regulations

Chief Owens explained a proposal that he developed in order to find some middle ground regarding revenue sharing within the current structure. This proposal would not change any existing revenue-sharing formulas, but would provide a third 50/50 formula within the regulation that would base revenue sharing on how much demand is put on the County's resources with staffing and equipment. The proposal was introduced to the Fire and Rescue Advisory Board solely for review at the December meeting in the likelihood that it would be brought forward for action at the January meeting.

**Question Asked: "With the asterisk for the "special service," what did they want that changed to?"**

Chief Owens answered that they want it removed in total so that no County-owned units are counted against the volunteer corporation.

**Question Asked: "Special Service Units, I'm thinking medic unit. Is that particularly what we're talking about there?"**

Chief Owens replied that the real intention in that was to say that companies should own their primary service units. Special service units can be provided by the County under that proposal.

**Question Asked: "Looking at the fail rates, if a company isn't meeting the standard through this proposal, they would still be able to get 25% more money, even if they aren't meeting the response standard or whatever that may be? Has there been any discussion as far as adding or looking at something in there with that?"**

Chief Owens stated that there had not, and that part of the goal of this was to help the transition to 24-hour staffing. He does expect some discussion down the road regarding actual performance standards, and the fail rate that may affect this as well.

**Question Asked: "How does this tie in with Brunswick Fire Company and Ambulance Company with the ambulance being up there at the fire company and the proposed changes?"**

"It doesn't," replied Chief Owens, further stating that he heard about that loud and clear at the Executive Committee meeting. President Smothers added that they are trying to rectify some additional funding sources to try to help those departments, all while staying within the federal guidelines on what they are permitted to do with the funds.

**Question Asked: "So with the federal guidelines, and I'm not very familiar with that, does that dictate out, then, who can receive the EMS billing money? So like a fire company or somebody that doesn't have a primary ambulance can receive the money, but the County can use it in the general fund to buy dump trucks or trash trucks or other expenditures?"**

Chief Owens replied, "The County would demonstrate that the County share of EMS billing money goes to salaries." This was followed by a discussion on how funding can be spent, the limitations of spending, etc.

**Question Asked: "Going from 75% to 50% doesn't sound like a lot. Coming up to 50% from 25% doesn't sound like a lot, but it's all dependent on call volume, because 25% of 100 calls versus 25% of a thousand calls could be a lot of money. So how is that taken into consideration to equalize the playing field among some of the different corporations?"**

Chief Owens responded, "It really isn't. The percentage-based formula is fixed and treated equally corporation-to-corporation, but workload certainly reflects expenses that you need to operate with."

**Question Asked: "If I recall, you can't bill if you don't transport."**

"That's correct," replied Chief Owens.

**Question Asked: "Is that a Medicare or Medicaid rule?"**

"It is a CMS regulation," answered Chief Owens.

**Question Asked: "And that can't be revisited?"**

President smothers replied, "No. That's set by Washington, D.C. I can't control that part of it."

**Question Asked: "Chief, the five that you have listed here that currently meet the guidelines, how many of those are 12-hour currently?"**

"Thurmont Ambulance is the only one currently," answered Chief Owens.

**Question Asked: "Okay, and they'd have to move to 24/7 for it to actually meet the criteria, right, based on what I'm reading?"**

Chief Owens replied, "Yes, right. That's what this proposal is based on. It's to take away the disincentive to make that change."

## **IX. ACTION ITEMS**

### **Amendment to Finance Regulations for Appropriation of Funds for the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Ambulance Corporations**

Kevin Schmidt made a motion to recommend the proposed change for the finance regulations. Susan Nicol seconded.

**Question Asked: "So this goes to the Executive Committee, but does that go back to the full Association before it came back here? So each individual company did not have a chance to vote on this?"**

President Smothers replied that each corporation had the opportunity to look at the language as it was initially presented, and it came back to the Executive Committee. Chief Owens confirmed with Chief Fox that it had been sent out to the Presidents and Chiefs. He stated that the intent was for the comments go back to the Executive Committee representatives, as they are the action body on behalf of the Association under the new guidelines. Chief Fox further confirmed that the Executive Committee had recommended the document as proposed.

**Question Asked: "And there are no changes from what left us and went to the Executive Committee, is that correct?"**

Chief Owens stated that the changes from the Fire Advisory Board were represented as Version 2, which is what was in the packet. It reflected the changes from the original draft.

**Question Asked: "Version 2 is what we approved in the October meeting to go to the County Executive Committee and has now come back without any additions or changes?"**

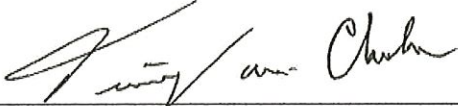
"That's correct," replied Chief Owens.

**VOTE: YES: 4 NO: 1 ABSTAIN: 1 PASSED**

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

**APPROVED**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Clarke, Chair

**APPROVED**

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1/14/2019  
Date of Approval

**APPROVED**

  
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Chad Cave, Vice-Chair

**APPROVED**

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1/14/2019  
Date of Approval